UNRWA

A survey of United Nations assistance to Palestine refugees

THE PALESTINE REFUGEES

In 1948, nearly three-quarters of a million Arabs became refugees during the disturbances before and after the creation of the State of Israel in the former British mandate territory of Palestine. The refugees fled to Arab-held areas: the largest number to eastern Palestine, now better known as the West Bank (of the river Jordan); many to Gaza Strip, subsequently administered by Egypt; others to Jordan, Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic; some even further afield. This influx of largely destitute families was an overwhelming burden on the Arab host countries.

Emergency assistance was provided promptly by international voluntary agencies supported by funds channelled through the United Nations Relief for Palestine Refugees (UNRPR). Then, as hopes for the immediate return of the refugees to their homes faded, the General Assembly, on 8 December 1949, set up the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). A temporary organization and successor to UNRPR, UNRWA began operations on 1 May 1950.

UNRWA's present task is to assist needy Palestine refugees by means of education, relief and health services (including food, shelter and environmental sanitation) to the extent that funds will permit. In operating these assistance programmes, UNRWA works closely with the governments of the host countries and, in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, the Occupying Power.

For relief purposes, UNRWA's working definition of a Palestine refugee is a person whose normal residence was Palestine for a minimum of two years immediately before the outbreak of the conflict in 1948 and who, as a result of that conflict, lost both his home and his means of livelihood. To be eligible for UNRWA assistance, he must be registered and in need, and must have taken refuge in Jordan, the West Bank (administered by Jordan from April 1950 to July 1988), Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic or the Gaza Strip – the areas contiguous to Israel in which the Agency operates. Descendants of registered refugees who fulfil certain criteria are also eligible for assistance. But this definition excludes economic refugees (who lost their homes or their means of livelihood, but not both), together with families who left Palestine but were quickly able to re-establish themselves and so were never in need.

Because the Agency's statistics are concerned primarily with accounting for services it renders to needy refugees, UNRWA does not have complete demographic data about the refugee population. According to Agency estimates, the refugee population is increasing by about 3 per cent annually and approximately 50 per cent of the refugees are 20

years of age or under.

Assistance has been stopped or reduced in about 1 million cases over the years since 1950 as refugees have developed their earning power, left UNRWA's area of operations or died. The resources released in this manner have been reallocated to children of refugee families still in need.

Today, as a result of natural increase in population, there are more than 2.3 million persons registered with UNRWA, apart from other Palastinians who also became refugees in 1948 but were not in need and did not register with UNRWA for assistance. None of either group has ever been offered the choice of repatriation or compensation for loss of or demage to property as repeatedly recommended by the Genenral Assembly*.

Political aspects of the Palestine refugee problem, as well as the question of repatriation and compensation, are the responsibility of United Nations bodies other than UNRWA: the Security Council and the Conciliation Commission for Palestine.

* Most recently on 8 December 1989 when the General Assembly once more recalled its earlier resolution 194 (III) of December 1948 in which it resolved, inter alia, that "refugees wishing to return to their homes and live in peace with their neighbours should be permitted to do so at the earliest practicable date, and that compensation should be paid for the property of those choosing not to return and for loss of or damage to property which, under principles of international law or in equity, should be made good by the Governments or authorities responsible."

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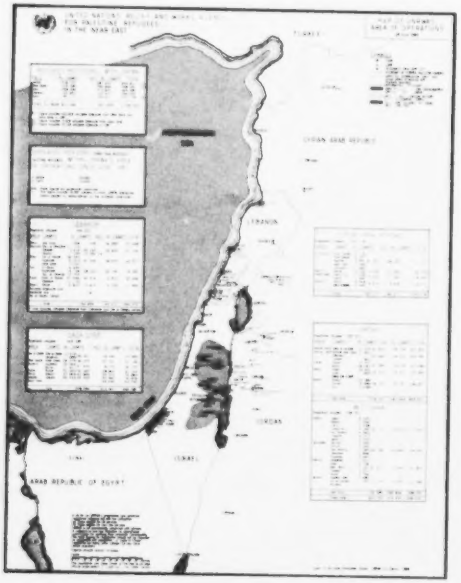
A DEEPENING CRISIS



In recent years, UNRWA has laboured under increasing operational and financial strain. The intractable nature of the Palestine question in which the problem of the Palestine refugees is embedded, the unique involvement of the United Nations in both problems and the failure to implement United Nations resolutions that might have facilitated a solution have made it necessary to continue UNRWA's services to the refugees.

The renewed Arab-Israeli hostilities in June 1967 resulted in more than half a million Arabs being displaced, including over 220,000 UNRWA-registered refugees uprooted for the second timemost of them from the West Bank to east Jordan. The General Assembly has repeatedly called upon Israel "to take immediate steps for the return of the displaced inhabitants" to the occupied territory but only a small percentage has been allowed to return.

Some 875,772 refugees are registered with UNRWA in the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip areas and, with the agreement of the Israeli authorities, UNRWA has continued to operate there.

The renewal of Arab-Israeli hostilities in October 1973 and the immediate consequences also had a profound effect on the political situation inside and outside the Middle East.

In 1975-76, civil war in Lebanon caused thousands of victims and terrible damage both among the Lebanese and the Palestine refugees living there. UNRWA's Lebanon Field Office remained in operation, despite difficulties, and with the help of voluntary agencies gave emergency relief to refugees displaced as a result of the fighting in Lebanon by providing mattresses, blankets, cooking utensils and children's clothing to families in dire need.

UNRWA Headquarters, situated in Beirut from May 1950, was removed twice from Beirut to Amman (Jordan) and Vienna (Austria) - from 1976 to November 1977, and again in july 1978. Key Headquarters administrative sections are located in Vienna, while most of the Education and Health departments, Relief Operations and Engineering divisions, are based in Amman.

In 1978 and 1979 Israeli military action in south Lebanon displaced thousands of residents, including Palestine refugees. UNRWA came to the rescue again with an emergency relief programme.

In June 1982, the Israeli army advanced into Lebanon, causing thousands of refugees to flee again and beginning a period of hostilities which would make most of the registered Palestine refugees living in Lebanon dependent on emergency relief services. Camps in south Lebanon were destroyed or heavily damaged. During the 1982-83 winter UNRWA began rehousing some of the 63,000 homeless in the south.

The prolonged camps war from June 1985 to early 1988 and fighting around Beirut camps in mid-1988 caused the displacement of 50,000 refugees from Tyre and Beirut and again led to the destruction of refugee housing and Agency premises – adding to UNRWA's financial crisis. Fortunately, the international community responded generously to special appeals for emergency aid in Lebanon.

UNRWA faced another crisis early in 1988 when two international staff members were kidnapped in south Lebanon and held for 25 days. Fears for staff safety continued in 1989. UNRWA moved its Lebanon office temporarily to Siblin Training Centre in April 1989 to escape continuous shelling in Beirut.

From December 1987 onwards, UNRWA has also provided emergency aid to the occupied territory of the West Bank and Gaza Strip following the eruption of the Palestinian uprising. Clinics worked day and night to cope with the flood of injured refugees, extra medical personnel were taken on and UNRWA took food and supplies into camps and towns under curfew whenever possible. From July 1989 the Agency carried out a major food distribution operation in the Gaza Strip.

The cost of maintaining UNRWA's regular education, training, relief and hsalth programmes rose from $40.6 million in 1967 to $227 million in 1989. The estimated cost for 1990 was $230 million.

Part of the additional expenditure is attributable to the increase in the school population (176,000 pupils in UNRWA schools in 1966; 351,136 in 1988/89) and to modest improvements in the quality of some services, but the impact of world-wide inflation and variations in currency exchange rates on the cost of UNRWA's operations has been severe. The system of voluntary financing results in uncertainty; the Agency begins each new financial year with no assurance that its essential services can be continued at the same level as in previous years.

UNRWA IN FIGURES

Refugees

There were 2,354,404 Palestine refugees registered with UNRWA on 30 September 1989, of whom two million were receiving (or were eligible for) some form of assistance. Registered refugees in the five fields of operations totalled:

Jordan	908,315
West Bank	401,903
Gaza Strip	473,869
Lebanon	295,320
Syrian Arab Republic	274,997
Total	2,354,404

(In 1967, 375,738 registered refugees from the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip were displaced to Jordan and 32,236 refugees from the Quneitra district were displaced within the Syrian Arab Republic. These figures are part of the total registered refugee population above).

In addition there is a large number of displaced persons, uprooted for the first time in 1967, in Jordan, the Syrian Arab Republic and the Arab Republic of Egypt. UNRWA was authorized as a temporary measure to provide emergency assistance as far as practicable for them, but lack of funds has severely limited the application of this policy. UNRWA distributes rations to some 192,000 displaced persons in Jordan at the expense of the Jordanian Government.

Refugee Camps

770,375 registered refugees (32.7 per cent of the registered refugees) and 49,135 other persons live in 61 refugee camps. The rest of the refugee population lives in cities, towns and villages alongside other Palestinians or host-country nationals.

Nutrition

Refugee children, babies, nursing mothers and pregnant women receive food or milk supplements fron UNRWA. Until 1982, all refugee families also received basic food rations. But the pressure of funding required this programme to be cut down. The neediest refugees – including widows, orphans, the sick and disabled – still get rations.

Supplementary Feeding

35,410 mid-day meals are served by UNRWA six days a week, and about 136,000 refugees regularly receive some other form of extra nutrition as "special hardship cases"

Health Care

UNRWA operates 100 out-patient health care centres and health points, 41 dental clinics, 35 laboratories and 16 specialist clinics (dealing mainly with diabetes). The Agency also provides potable water and essential sanitation services in camps.

Welfare

Despite inadequate resources, an effort is made to give additional help for refugees in especially acute personal hardship – including the disabled – and to promote communal self-help projects.

Schools

Some 351,000 refugee children attend classes in nine grades (10 in Lebanon) in 628 UNRWA primary and preparatory schools, most of which have to apply double-shifting because of a shortage of classroom space.

Vocational and Teacher Training

There are 4,958 places for young men and women in mostly two-year courses in vocational and teacher training at eight UNRWA centres (including the three West Bank centres which were closed starting late 1987 for more than two years).

Staff

UNRWA has posts for 18,257 persons – 131 international staff (including 18 lent by UNESCO and WHO) and 18,126 local staff. Of the latter, some 12,000 are teachers or employed otherwise in the Agency's education programme.

Income

The international staff are not a charge on voluntary funds: most of them are paid for by the United Nations (since 1975), UNESCO and WHO. Otherwise, UNRWA's operations are financed by voluntary contributions from governments, international and non-governmental organizations, church groups, business corporations and private individuals who also contribute generously.

The same sources fund the Agency's separate emergency budget ($46 million in 1989) which enables it to respond to crises in Lebanon, the West Bank and Gaza Strip. They also gave more than $30 million by late 1989 for long-term projects in the two occupied areas – including better housing and new or expanded sewage systems in refugee camps.

Budget

Some $227 million was needed in 1989 for UNRWA to maintain its programmes of assistance at 1988 levels. (The estimated cost for 1990 was $230 million.) In addition, the Agency had an emergency budget of some $46 million for Lebanon, the West Bank and Gaza Strip for 1989 – and a similar amount earmarked for 1990.

REFUGEE CAMPS

When UNRWA began operations in 1950, it took over from voluntary agencies some 60 camps in which large numbers of Palestine refugees had been hastily accommodated in tents, usually on sites provided by the local governments.

In the course of time, the number of these camps was reduced to 51 and tents were replaced by shelters of mud brick or concrete blocks. Some of these shelters were constructed by UNRWA; others were built by the refugees themselves, with or without UNRWA assistance in cash or kind. In many cases the original huts have been improved and other rooms added; a typical refugee shelter in one of these camps today has two rooms and a cooking area, surrounded by a compound wall for privacy. There is a private latrine in 95 per cent of the shelters; there may also be a water tap and sometimes electricity.

After the renewal of Arab-Israeli hostilities in June 1967, six new camps were established in Jordan to accommodate refugees and other persons displaced from the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip. At the same time four new camps were established in the Syrian Arab Republic to shelter displaced refugees from the Quneitra district. In all these new camps, the original tents were replaced by shelters erected by UNRWA.

In September 1989 there were 770,375 registered refugees reported as resident in the 61 camps. UNRWA provides services for those registered for them, whether living in the camps or not. Because the camps have large refugee populations, UNRWA maintains installations in them, such as centres for distributing basic rations, supplementary feeding centres, clinics and schools; it also provides some services normally supplied by governments or municipalities - for example,

sanitation, garbage disposal and the construction and maintenance of roads and paths. UNRWA also provides similar facilities (schools, clinics, etc.) to refugees living outside camps.

It is important to note that, while the Agency provides services in the camps, it does not administer camps. The camps are not extraterritorial areas under United Nations jurisdiction and UNRWA has no legislative or police powers. The local governments (Jordan, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic and, as Occupying Power, Israel in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip) are responsible for the maintenance of law and order and similar functions. In any event, the camps are not closed areas. The inhabitants are normally free to move in and out of them, now as in the past.

NUTRITION

Food rations for the neediest refugees, supplementary feeding for children and powdered milk for babies are some elements of UNRWA's nutrition programme. Up to the summer of 1982, UNRWA was providing a basic ration to more than 830,000 Palestine refugees; but, as more and more refugees have become self-supporting, the need for rations has decreased, except for the very poor. Food rations continue to be provided to the poorest refugees – numbering 136,315 at the end of 1989.

It is generally accepted that UNRWA's priority programme is education, but that has been seriously threatened with cuts in the past due to lack of funds, while millions of dollars in contributions in kind were tied up in the basic ration programme. Against this background, the General Assembly of the United Nations in March 1982 decided unanimously that governments which have been giving contributions in the form of foodstuffs should be asked to convert them into cash or should allow their sale for cash. Some major donors of foodstuffs have agreed.

The supplementary feeding programme is designed to protect the health of those categories of refugees who are nutritionally vulnerable: babies and children, pregnant and nursing women and tuberculosis sufferers.

Milk is given to some infants from six to 36 months and non-breast-fed babies under six months; pregnant women from the fifth month of pregnancy and for one year after delivery; and sick adults upon medical recommendation.

Nutritionally balanced mid-day meals are provided six days a week at 91 supplementary feeding centres including two voluntary agency centres to an average of 35,410 beneficiaries. These are mostly children below six years, but also school children and sick adults sent by UNRWA doctors. A special high-protein, high-calorie diet is also available daily in more than 60 nutrition rehabilitation clinics to infants and children suffering from diarrhoea and malnutrition.

Extra rations are distributed to pregnant and nursing women (38,013) and 661 non-hospitalized tuberculosis patients.

After Israeli military action in southern Lebanon in 1978 and 1979, emergency feeding programmes were organized for the refugees who had fled from the area to safer areas near Saida and Beirut. And in 1982, after the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, about 180,000 were provided with emergency rations until April 1984.

Refugees in Lebanon have received emergency rations since the long "camps war" and amid deteriorating economic conditions. In early 1988 feeding and ration programmes were expanded for refugees in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. During 1988 and until the end of September 1989, UNRWA distributed 25,000 tonnes of food in the two areas.

HEALTH CARE

UNRWA health services are under the technical supervision of the World Health Organization (WHO) and are designed to provide the refugee community with the best possible health care, within the limits of the resources available.

Some 20 per cent of the Agency's budget was devoted to health services in 1989.

The emphasis is necessarily on preventive medicine, particularly regular and mass immunizations, mother and child care, environmental sanitation and health education.

UNRWA provides preventive and curative services at its 100 health units. Mobile health teams are also used. In 1988 there were 5.4 million patient visits in the Agency's health centres and dental clinics. There are 796 hospital beds to which serious cases can be referred.

Staff in UNRWA's Health Department have worked overtime to cope with one emergency after another in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Health clinics were kept open longer hours with nearly 40 extra doctors and nurses hired to treat injured refugees. The Agency's supplementary feeding programme was extended to reach an extra 39,000 refugees in the two areas.

Communicable disease control is a day-to-day concern. Although eye, intestinal and respiratory infections and the infectious diseases of childhood are common, the incidence of many diseases (trachoma and tuberculosis, for instance) has declined over the years and infant mortality has also fallen substantially.

The refugee community has never had a serious epidemic of an important communicable disease, dispite crowded living conditions and the difficulty of providing adequate drinking water and sanitation. This favourable record is largely the result of routine and mass immunization, prompt treatment, en-

vironmental health measures and public health education, coupled with the refugees' own resistance to disease. By these means, outbreaks of cholera, which pose a particular threat to the camp population, have always been rapidly contained.

UNRWA health services concentrate as much as possible on the critical early stages in life – pregnancy, childbirth and infancy. The Agency operates 100 maternal and child health clinics.

About 50 per cent of pregnant and nursing women use UNRWA's routine immunization services for mothers and babies, together with pre-natal care and regular examinations including health instruction and any necessary treatment.

Many of the others go to conveniently located government or voluntary agency clinics.

The UNRWA medical staff, most of whom are refugees themselves, include 164 doctors and 33 dentists, and 612 qualified nurses, practical nurses and midwives.

The children in UNRWA schools are medically examined on school entry and subsequently receive health supervision, immunization and treatment as required. Undernourished children may be referred to a feeding centre for a daily meal.

UNRWA clinics recorded 5,378,592 visits by refugees in the year to 31 December 1988.

Medical consultation	3,494,822
Injection	723,763
Dressing	616,961
Eye treatment	284,654
Dental care	258,392
	5,378,592

A comprehensive health education programme has been built into UNRWA's health services. Twenty-four health education workers cooperate with doctors, nurses, midwives, teachers and social workers in efforts to raise the level of health awareness among the refugees in their difficult environment.

Environmental Sanitation

This part of the health programme is vital not only for the refugees' own health, but also for that of the communities with which they mix. It includes the provision in the camps of potable water and latrines, the removal of waste water, the control of insects and rodents and, to some extent, provision of slaughterhouses. Joint self-help schemes (UNRWA provides the materials, the refugees give their labour) for the construction of drains and pavement of pathways have been adopted in a number of camps in Lebanon, Jordan, the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and the Syrian Arab Republic. The Agency is also involved in projects to upgrade the sewage systems in several camps.

RELIEF AND SOCIAL SERVICES

UNRWA welfare workers seek out especially needy persons – the disabled, the chronically ill, widows with minor children and the aged – and other refugees with special problems, and try to help them with counselling and extra assistance. Because of a shortage of funds, what can be done falls short of the need.

The Agency gives out small cash grants, special assistance such as clothing, blankets, prosthetic devices and layettes, places old people in institutions or arranges for orphans to be placed by local charitable organizations. It also provides special training for handicapped refugees – 107 of them at the centre for the Blind in Gaza (run by UNRWA and subsidized by the Pontifical Mission for Palestine).

UNRWA runs sewing and carpentry courses, pre-school play centres and co-operatives for making and selling embroidery and clothing. During 1988/89, 1,047 women took part in 11-month sewing courses run by the Agency at 47 women's programme centres. The Agency has also organized courses for women in reading and writing, bookkeeping and the production of saleable articles.

By the end of 1989 some 200 families were participating in self-support projects under which the Agency helps refugees to set up small workshops and businesses with start-up capital and support from a social worker. In partnership with the British non-governmental organization Cooperation for Development, the Agency has also sponsored a small credit enterprise programme which, by the end of October 1989, had assisted 139 projects in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Loans – typically $10,000 for about three years – have been given for projects ranging from dairy cattle, market-gardening and seedling nurseries to clothing and solar-energy workshops. In June 1989 the programme was introduced in Jordan.

UNRWA's relief services have been increasingly in demand in 1988 and 1989 with crises in Lebanon, the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The Agency has delivered food to refugees under curfew in the occupied areas, assisted with shelter reconstruction in Beirut and given cash grants to needy refugees.

EDUCATION

Education is everone's lifeline to the future, but it is particularly vital for refugees. Landless, the Palestine refugees have had little scope for traditional farming skills. Impoverished, they have no capital for setting up in business. Their only resources have been and still are education and their intense eagerness to learn.

The education programme, a joint undertaking by UNRWA and UNESCO, conforms to the general pattern of education in the Arab host countries. The UNRWA/UNESCO school system offers six years of elementary education and three to four years of preparatory (junior secondary) education, depending on the national system, to all refugee children. The Agency operates 628 elementary and preparatory schools with 351,136 pupils and 10,435 teaching posts. Almost all the teachers are Palestine refugees; they receive technical guidance from a small cadre of qualified refugee and international specialists lent to UNRWA by UNESCO, which also provides the Director of Education and some of his senior staff.

Rapid growth has been one of the main features -and problems- of the UNRWA/UNESCO school system. Enrolment increased by almost one per cent in the 1988/89 school year and expenditure on education accounted for more than half of UNRWA's total budget in 1989.

The schools are simply equipped but have the necessary teaching materials. Some are accommodated in buildings designed and constructed by UNRWA; others must use rented buildings not designed as schools.

In recent years, UNRWA has been getting special funding – notably from Arab Gulf states – to build modern schoolhouses. However, a shortage of classrooms remains a problem as the school-age population grows. Most schools still have to apply a double-shift system under which one school – headteacher, teachers and pupils – occupies a building in the morning and a second school takes over in the afternoon. In 1988/89 there was double-shifting in 75 per cent of UNRWA schools.

From the beginning of the Palestinian intifada in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, UNRWA schools were repeatedly closed by military order. West Bank pupils lost more than a year's schooling.

UNRWA does not operate senior secondary (high) schools: refugee pupils find places in government or private establishments. The Agency gives grants to a number of refugee pupils in private schools when places cannot be obtained in government schools which accept refugee pupils without charge.

University scholarships are awarded to a small number of the most gifted and needy students; in 1988/89 there were 453 awards. UNRWA scholarships are partly funded from special contributions.

Vocational and Teacher Training

UNRWA attaches great importance to its vocational and teacher training programme. The Agency's eight centres have places for 4,958 young men and women.

In the vocational training programme, the skills taught have been selected to correspond to the needs of the Arab world so that they offer sound career openings. Graduates usually find work readily, either in the host countries or further afield, and many are employed in the oil fields, construction industry and businesses of the Gulf.

The Agency offers 41 vocational courses (covering the building, electrical and mechanical trades and semi-professional skills). Women are increasingly taking part in courses which were attended only by men until a few years ago. Carpenters, electricians, electronics, auto and instrument mechanics, diesel and construction equipment mechanics, secretaries, assistant pharmacists, laboratory technicians, infant leaders, hairdressers and institutional managers and a score of other kinds of tradesmen and women graduate from UNRWA training centres.

The pre-service teacher training programme provides teachers for UNRWA schools and for employment in government or private schools in Arab countries. At present three UNRWA centres offer two-year post-secondary courses for men and women intending to become elementary school teachers.

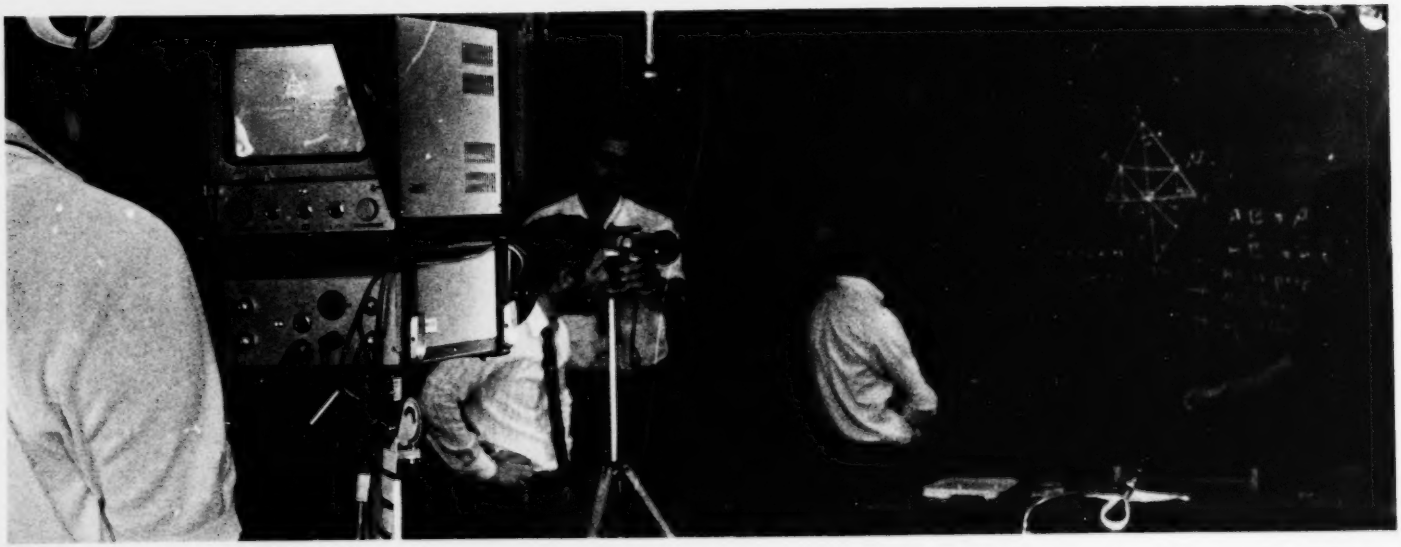
By the middle of 1989, 52,846 young men and women had graduated from UNRWA vocational and teacher training centres since the programme began in 1953. The majority are gainfully employed and contributing to the social and economic development of the Middle East.

From the start of the intifada in the occupied territory, UNRWA's three training centres in the West Bank and one in Gaza were closed by miliary order. The Gaza centre was allowed to reopen in October 1988, but the West Bank centres remained closed until march 1990.

Institute of Education

In-service training for UNRWA educational staff is provided by the UNRWA/UNESCO Institute of Education, employing correspondence courses, audio-visual aids and tutorial staff in each field. In all five fields, UNRWA Educational Development Centres have incorporated school supervisors and the Institute's field representatives in their staff.

Training varies in length from one to three years and consists of correspondence courses, weekly seminars and summer courses. By mid-1989 a cumulative total of 3,921 teachers had successfully completed the Institute's in-service professional courses for elementary teachers and 3,309 had finished courses for preparatory teachers; all of them were graded as qualified teachers. The Institute is also improving the quality of education by refresher courses for qualified teachers and courses for head teachers as well as specialized seminars and research to meet special needs and developments in the curricula of the UNRWA/UNESCO school system.



UNRWA School Enrolment 1988/89

Field	Elementary			Preparatory		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
Gaza	33,735	31,743	65,478	13,569	12,175	25,744
Jordan	47,505	46,026	93,531	21,115	19,789	40,904
West Bank	12,696	15,225	27,921	5,207	6,147	11,354
Lebanon	11,385	11,315	22,700	5,039	5,087	10,126
Syria	19,123	17,917	37,040	8,576	7,762	16,338
Total	124,444	122,226	246,670	53,506	50,960	104,466

These figures include 55,790 non-eligible children (many of them children of displaced persons) attending UNRWA schools. In addition, 110,339 refugee pupils attended elementary, preparatory and secondary classes in government and private schools.

UNRWA Training Centres 1987/1988)

Field	Centre	Type	Capacity
Gaza Strip	Gaza	Vocational	608 men
Joran	Amman	Vocational	108 men 272 women
		Teacher	125 men 175 women
	Wadi-Seer	Vocational	768 men 20 women
West Bank	Kalandia	Vocational	480 men
	Ramallah Women's	Vocational Teacher	348 women 300 women
	Ramallah Men's	Vocational Teacher	116 men 250 men
Lebanon	Siblin	Vocational	553 men 71 women
Syrian Arab Republic	Damascus	Vocational	667 men 97 women
		Total	4,958

From autumn 1987 and throughout 1988 and 1989, the West Bank centres with 944 vocational and 550 teacher training places were closed under Israeli order. The Gaza Training Centre was allowed to reopen in October 1988.

FINANCES

Whereas the budgets of the United Nations and of the specialized agencies are funded by assessment of member states, UNRWA is dependent on voluntary contributions, except for the costs of its international staff which are borne by the UN, UNESCO and WHO. Some 65 governments and the European Community regularly contribute to UNRWA.

UNRWA also receives generous contributions for its regular programmes from 57 non-governmental organizations, church bodies and other groups, business firms and a number of individuals. Seventy-five such organizations and individuals support the Agency's emergency programme in the Occupied Territory.

In addition to their contributions to UNRWA, the Arab host countries and Israel (in respect of the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip) supply goods and services direct to the refugees.

Balancing the Budget

UNRWA's rate of expenditure expressed in U.S. dollars has risen rapidly in recent years. Local inflation and inflationary pressures on world markets where UNRWA purchases supplies and services have played a part, as have adverse exchange rates and the school expansion caused by the natural increase of the school population.

Despite renewed appeals from the General Assembly to "all Governments as a matter of urgency to make the most generous efforts possible to meet the anticipated needs of UNRWA", regular annual contributions have not increased in proportion to the rise in expenditure. A number of governments have made special or extraordinary contributions but the latter, while reducing the budget deficit in the year in which they are given, provide no assurance of support for the future. Consequently, the ability of the Agency to remain financially and administratively viable can not be taken for granted.

UNRWA Staff and Posts

The Agency has 131 international posts (including 18 staff on loan from other organizations) and 18,126 posts for locally recruited personnel, almost all of whom are Palestine refugees themselves. In addition, there are 34 extra-budgetary international staff – including two Legal Officers and 20 Refugee Affairs Officers appointed to increase the international presence in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Division of Posts by Activity	International	Local	Total
Relief Services (including registration)	14	548	562
Education and Training	12	12,564	12,576
Health Services	6	3,242	3,248
Common Services	99	1,772	1,871
Total	131	18,126	18,257
Distribution of Posts by Location			
Headquarters and Liaison Offices	88	279	367
Gaza Strip	9*	4,404	4,413
Jordan	7	5,519	5,526
West Bank	14*	2,875	2,889
Lebanon	6**	2,424	2,430
Syrian Arab Republic	7	2,625	2,632
Total	131	18,126	18,257

* plus, as of end 1989, 9 Refugee Affairs Offices and a Legal Officer in Gaza; 10 Refugee Affairs Officers and a Legal Officer in West Bank and 7 other posts in those fields funded out of the Emergency budget.

** plus 4 posts funded out of the Emergency budget.

Printed by UNRWA - Printing Unit - Beirut, Lebanon

Published in May 1990 by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East.